

Macbeth Study Guide Questions

NAMES _____

ACT I

1. What mood does Shakespeare establish at the beginning of the play, largely for the benefit of the audience?
2. How is the absent Macbeth presented in Scene 2? Why?
3. How do Macbeth and Banquo react to the sight of the witches?
4. How do Macbeth and Banquo receive the news that Ross and Angus bring?
5. How is Lady Macbeth characterized in Scene 5?
6. What does Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's relationship appear to be like?
7. What is Lady Macbeth's evaluation of her husband?
8. What is the attitude of Macbeth's soliloquy in Scene 7?
9. What is Lady Macbeth's function in Scene 7?
10. Why is Lady Macbeth's gender (her womanliness) questioned?

ACT II

11. What do Banquo and Fleance talk about in Scene 1 and why is it significant?
12. What is the significance of the dagger in Scene 1?
13. How is Lady Macbeth's composure in Scene 2?
14. What effect does Macbeth's entrance after the murder reveal about him?
15. What is ironic about Lady Macbeth's comfort?
16. What function or role does the porter play in Scene 3?
17. Why is attention focused on Macduff?
18. Why does Lady Macbeth faint?
19. Why do many unnatural events occur during this night?
20. Why does Macbeth wish to be dead?
21. How do Duncan's sons react to their father's murder?
22. What is the significance of Macduff's comments?

ACT III

23. In Scene 1, how is Macbeth reacting to his new success?
24. In Scene 2, how is Lady Macbeth feeling about her new position?
25. Why does Macbeth keep his planned attack on Banquo a secret from his wife?
26. Why does Macbeth call on darkness to come at this time?
27. How does Banquo react to the attack?
28. What is the significance of Fleance's escape?
29. What is the importance of Banquo's ghost?
30. How does Lady Macbeth respond to her husband's outbursts?
31. What is revealed about the conditions of Scotland?
32. What is the purpose of Hecate's meeting with the witches?

ACT IV

33. Why is the witches' chant given in such detail in Scene 1?
34. Explain the paradox that must be present in what the apparitions say?
35. What is important about Macbeth's commands to murder Macduff's family?
36. How does Malcolm test Macduff's loyalty? Why?
37. What is Macduff's reaction to the news of his loss?

ACT V

38. What is Lady Macbeth's mental state in Scene 1?
39. What are the conditions like in Scotland?
40. What is Macbeth's attitude in Scene 3?
41. What is the importance of the camouflage in Scene 4?
42. How does Macbeth take the news of his wife's death?
43. How does Macduff reveal Macbeth's doom?
44. What is the significance of Malcolm becoming king?